

Today's News - Wednesday, December 15, 2010

- Farrelly oh-so-eloquently bemoans what would happen if Sydney undertook something like Sarkozy's Le Grand Paris plan: "it would be (badly) exhibited, provoke uproar...while some backroom smoocher grabbed the land, surgically excised all ideas...to build some depressing piece of shite."
- Parman calls for more place-specific proportionality and appropriateness when considering density and urbanity.
- Kennicott gives only luke-warm thumbs-up to winning design of a D.C. high school: "the design choice may be a near miss with greatness," but "the pure ghastliness of the current facility ensures that the new structure will be an improvement."
- The new Melbourne Recital Centre is a "triumph" and "a rich and exciting architectural spectacle" (lots of over-the-top accolades, too bad no pix).
- Chaban cheers a seaworthy Coney Island Aquarium - at last - but too bad the original winning "stunning design" was "fed to the sharks" (great slide show).
- In Kentucky, visions of "a Christian tourism corridor" with big plans for an Ark Encounter (Tower of Babel and baby giraffes included) just down the road a piece from the Creation Museum; it will be "a model of environmentally sensitive development" (even if the developers may not believe in global warming).
- Hawthorne sees the collapse of the Metrodome's dome in Minneapolis as the "latest sign of the dome's demise as a symbol of progress and expertise," and offers "one of the most dramatic videos of architectural failure you'll ever see."
- Litt minces no words re: Clevelanders' chance to vote on design details of a new bridge: "It's a depressing coda to a 10-year design process" that "raises serious questions about America's capacity to create beautiful, memorable and well-designed infrastructure...This country ought to be able to do better."
- Schumacher on FLW's big ideas for small homes and efforts to save a small cluster of them in Milwaukee (who knew?!?): "At a time when architects are increasingly focused on smaller, more sober and green building...Wright has some things to say" (great pix, too).
- An in-depth (and often amusing) look at DS+R: the "enfants terribles of architecture have come a long way."
- LaBarre offers an in-depth (and often amusing) take on BIG's Ingels, Denmark's own enfant terrible and "architecture's very own Lady Gaga" who doesn't want to get into a "high-rise pissing match" for his first NYC project.
- IDSA Design of the Decade awards: new, sometimes confusing, categories, but winners are very cool.
- Call for entries: 2011 Ceramic Tiles of Italy Competition.
- Feliz aniversário e parabéns to Oscar Niemeyer on his 103rd birthday (we can't wait to hear the samba this "last Stalinist" has composed)!
- We couldn't resist: in Tokyo, "an architect working for the United States Government" manages to buy \$36,400 worth of drinks in one night (he promises it wasn't taxpayers' money and hopes his wife will understand).

To subscribe to the free daily newsletter [click here](#)

Too scared, too dull: why we miss the French connection: Le Grand Paris, le Petit Sydney...Paris has a history of grand projects...In Sydney, even if such a study happened, it would be (badly) exhibited, provoke uproar...while some backroom smoocher grabbed the land, surgically excised all ideas...to build some depressing piece of shite. By Elizabeth Farrelly -- I.M. Pei; Jean Nouvel; Carlos Ott; Bernard Tschumi; Gae Aulenti; Roland Castro/Atelier Castro; MVRDV; Richard Rogers - Sydney Morning Herald

Density and Urbanity: ...the justification for density in urban settings often takes leave of nuance, cutting itself off from the qualities of place that are reflected in the existing urban fabric...Behind urbanity are the place-specifics of proportionality and appropriateness. And behind them are the people who care about these places, sometimes with the irrational ardor of lovers. Planners should be among them. By John Parman - Living Urbanism

Welcome to Generic High: Winning design for new Dunbar High School underwhelms: ...a major improvement over the 1970s concrete-and-brick structure...Unfortunately, it looks like the design choice may also be a near miss with greatness...The pure ghastliness of the current facility ensures that the new, \$120 million structure will be an improvement. By Philip Kennicott -- Ehrenkrantz, Eckstut & Kuhn/Moody-Nolan [video] - Washington Post

Melbourne's symphony of architecture and engineering: The Melbourne Recital Centre is a triumph...that the result is such a rich and exciting architectural spectacle is the ultimate accolade. -- Ashton Raggatt McDougall; Arup - Sydney Morning Herald

Finally, a Seaworthy Coney Island Aquarium: ...in 2006, the New York Aquarium held a dramatic architecture competition...A stunning design by WRT and Barcelona architects Cloud 9 was chosen...That plan was fed to the sharks...final plans for the aquarium have been approved...the result is a facility satisfying as a day at the beach. -- Edelman Sultan Knox Wood/Portico Group; West 8/WXY Architecture; Smith-Miller Hawkinson [images, slide show] - New York Observer

In Kentucky, Noah's Ark Theme Park Is Planned: ...developers of Ark Encounter...expect to spend \$150 million...designed to be a model of environmentally sensitive development...to minimize its carbon footprint. "I don't believe in global warming, but I do believe we've got to be good stewards of everything God's given us." -- The Troyer Group [images] - New York Times

The Metrodome collapse and the shifting symbolism of the domed stadium: ...the dome - as a building type and a representation of American might - has been taking it on the chin...The latest sign of the dome's demise as a symbol of progress and expertise...a heavy snowfall caused the roof of the Metrodome in Minneapolis...to collapse...One of the most dramatic videos of architectural failure you'll ever see. By Christopher Hawthorne -- Skidmore, Owings & Merrill/SOM (1982) [video] - Los Angeles Times

ODOT invites public to sound off on minor design details of I-90 Inner Belt Bridge: Participants can vote on their preferences among three equally ugly streetlamp designs, three equally dull concepts for concrete bridge piers or three nearly interchangeable designs for lighting the underside of the span. It's a depressing coda to a 10-year design process... By Steven Litt -- Walsh-HNTB [images, links] - Cleveland Plain Dealer

Frank Lloyd Wright, big ideas for small homes: ...some of Wright's most lasting ideas, those that have relevance today, are about smallness and modesty...creating artful but affordable homes for America's working class. The best evidence...a cluster of petite homes...on Milwaukee's near south side...six American System-Built Homes...At a time when architects are increasingly focused on smaller, more sober and green building...Wright has some things to say. By Mary Louise Schumacher [images] - Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Diller and Scofidio, in the business of architecture and artistry: Spouses Elizabeth Diller and Rick Scofidio, the designers Eli Broad tapped for his Grand Avenue museum, continue building on an inventive union...in the last few years...along with partner Charles Renfro, made two significant marks on New York and one on Boston...The enfants terribles of architecture have come a long way. -- Diller Scofidio + Renfro - Los Angeles Times

The Next Big Thing: With the opening of his newest project - the mammoth 8House in Copenhagen - Bjarke Ingels continues his relentless climb to the top...he's architecture's very own Lady Gaga. By Suzanne LaBarre -- Bjarke Ingels Group/BIG [images] - Metropolis Magazine

A Confusing Design Decade: IDSA Design of the Decade awards must be commended for giving up the disciplinary model for categories. But while one might think that having nice, open categories...it turns out to be even more

confusing...Nonetheless, the Gold winners in each category are some really worthy design objects... -- Bohlin Cywinski Jackson/Eight Inc./ISP Design [links to images/info]- Metropolis Magazine

Call for entries: 2011 Ceramic Tiles of Italy Competition: recognizes the exceptional work of North American architects and designers who feature Italian ceramic tiles in their institutional, residential or commercial/hospitality spaces; no entry fee; cash prizes; deadline: January 17, 2011- Italian Trade Commission

103-year-old Brazilian architect composes samba music: Oscar Niemeyer...celebrates his birthday Dec 15...'Tranquilo con la Vida' (Feeling Good about Life)..."I wanted to do a tribute to the people of the favelas (shantytowns)," said Niemeyer, who describes himself as "the last Stalinist".- Sify (India)

Drinker buys record \$36,400 round of shots: ...an architect working for the United States Government, achieved the unlikely feat in brazen defiance of a sour market mood...in a dismal quarter for the Japanese economy.- The Australian



[Alfonso Architects: Tampa Covenant Church Addition & Renovation, Tampa, Florida](#)

Note: Pages will open in a new browser window.
External news links are not endorsed by ArchNewsNow.com.
Free registration may be required on some sites.
Some pages may expire after a few days.

[Yesterday's News](#)

© 2010 ArchNewsNow.com